

LIFE IN THE USAR

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The USAR Warrant Officer accession mission this year was 350, we accessed 362, for a total of 106%. The overall national Army Reserve recruiting mission of 26.5K was also met. This is a good news story for the entire force. The Army Reserve is alive and well!!!

However, the lines between active duty and USAR continue to blur in the supply and demand of the war on terrorism. Active duty billets are being filled with USAR Soldiers who take on the demands of full-time duty and continue to succeed. Some of them leave behind successful civilian jobs; and most all of them leave their families behind. Unlike our active-duty counterparts, this is not a PCS move, but rather an additional duty tour that brings a different level of separation from established support systems.

Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, more than 102,000 of the Army Reserve's 200,000 members have mobilized to support the war effort. We have over 26,000 Reservists currently mobilized serving in about 20 countries around the world, including Iraq. In addition to carrying out a broad range of critical missions overseas, about 7,500 Reservists are mobilized stateside, training other troops about to deploy, and supporting the global war effort.

Retention rates of Soldiers with combat experience, who have deployed into either Afghanistan or Iraq, continue to be very high. Many Army Reserve troops have already served two deployments, and some are preparing for their third deployment. Support programs like Employer Support of Guard and Reserve and Army Reserve Family Programs contribute to this retention rate.

While supporting the war, we are in a constant state of transformation and modification. Change has become the norm - not the exception. Army Reserve units are being transformed to better align with the Army Campaign Plan and modularity transformation initiatives. *This is not your grandfather's Army Reserve.*

Command structure is changing from TDA organizations to Operational and Functional (O&F) Commands that provide training and readiness oversight functions of their subordinate units. Army Reserve Medical Command, Military Intelligence Readiness Command, 11th Aviation Command, and the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, are among the O&F commands in current operation. The 377th Theater Sustainment Command will become the largest command in the Army reserve with five general-officer Expeditionary Sustainment Commands (ESC). ESCs are a critical component to the Army Reserve theater Sustainment role. They are designed to forward deploy in an austere theater, and provide combat service assets and services.

The six current Institutional Training Divisions will realign under three new commands; the 108th Training Command (Initial Entry Training), 80th Training Command (The Army School System), and the 84th Training Command (Leader Readiness). Existing brigades and battalions will realign under these three commands.

The Training Support Divisions (TSD) will realign under Army Reserve (AR) TSD West, AR TSD East, the 91st and 78th Operations Group, and the 75th Battle Command Training Division (BCTD).

The transformation of the 10 Regional Readiness Commands (RRC) into 4 Regional Readiness Sustainment Commands (RRSC) will be complete in TY 08. These new RRSCs will provide personnel, information and resource management, facilities and equipment support to Army Reserve units in their geographic area. The former RRC missions of command and control, training and readiness oversight are shifting to the O&F Commands.

There are a lot of moving pieces and thousands of lives affected by the realignments and reorganization - but we will emerge as a stronger more efficient force. They didn't make these patches Velcro for no reason.

Our Soldiers are now more than ever able to adapt to, and augment, any size or type unit in the operational force. The skills gained from not only military training, but also the civilian sector, are value-added to joint force requirements.

Where will it all end? According to LTG Jack Stultz, Commanding General, US Army Reserve in the 2007 Army Reserve Posture Statement; "End State is an Army Reserve with a culture that embraces continuous transformation is capable of predictably and perpetually providing relevant operational forces to combatant commanders, and maintains strong mutually-supporting Warrior Citizen relationships among soldiers, families, employers - and the Army."

Our USAR Warrant Officers, though small in number, play a significant role in the ever changing force. We are the technical experts in our assigned fields and support the commander's goals and objectives. We maintain the readiness of our units by ensuring our personnel are trained and wartime ready. We support personnel deployment operations worldwide, and augment operations, mobilization and training. We also serve to support each of our fellow warrant officers personally and professionally by an active mentoring program and by recruiting the future officers of the Corps.

In closing, we are more than ever, one force, Army Strong and capable of meeting the ever changing needs to defend America. I am honored to serve as a Soldier and as your Assistant Vice President, USAR Affairs.